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THE LEADER OF FASHION

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At Court.

THE King and Queen have been leading a very quiet life since their return home. Since the Thanksgiving Service at St. Paul's Cathedral, on the day after their return, they have not fulfilled any public engagements. This, of course, is owing to the Court mourning for the late Duke of Fife.

Their Majesties and Queen Alexandra met the Princess Royal and her daughters on Saturday at Portsmouth, and the funeral is fixed to take place at St. George's Chapel, Windsor, on Wednesday of this week.

It was very fitting that Lord Farquhar should have had charge of the arrangements for conveying the coffin to Windsor. He has always been an intimate friend of the late Duke since the days between twenty and thirty years ago of "the Marlborough House set," of which both were prominent members in the circle of "intimes" which King Edward, then Prince of Wales, loved to gather round him.

For some years after their marriage the Duke and Duchess of Fife rented Castle Rising, Lord Farquhar's home in Norfolk, and here they lived while Mar Lodge was being rebuilt.

As soon as the funeral is over, it is very possible that Queen Alexandra and Princess Victoria may go over to Denmark to pay a visit to the King and Queen. His Majesty was not so well again last week, and there is no doubt that he will have to take the greatest care for some time to come.

groups of the Georgian and Victorian periods, and only in the Royal nurseries have there been cases containing the toys (so much simpler in construction in those days than they are now) with which little Princess Victoria amused herself nearly a century ago.

Queen Mary has always had a special affection for Kensington Palace, for her parents spent some months out of each of the first few years of their married life under its roof before White Lodge became their permanent home.

Both Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll, and Princess Henry of Battenberg have suites of apartments there, which form their London residences. It is possible that both Princesses may be in London at the time of the opening of the Museum, though, as a rule, Princess Henry prefers to remain abroad till the later spring.

THE WATERLOO CUP MEETING: SIR WYNDHAM AND LADY HANMER, WITH MISS HANMER, WATCHING THE TIES

The London Museum.

On March 21st, their Majesties will formally open the London Museum at Kensington Palace, in which they have been immensely interested ever since the suggestion for its existence was first started. They visited the rooms which contain the show-cases twelve months ago, when the whole plan was in embryo, and made several valuable suggestions to Mr. Guy Laking, who has had the carrying out of the arrangements.

Some people think the cases will spoil the look of the old-world rooms, corridors, and Royal "closets" which form that portion of Kensington Palace in which the Museum is arranged. Hitherto they have been given up exclusively to Royal portraits and portrait

Royalty and Racing.

It is a great satisfaction to everyone that His Majesty is to honour the Grand National meeting with his presence this year. The King will stay with Lord and Lady Derby at Knowsley for the meeting. Lady Derby has not been entertaining either in London or at Knowsley since the death of her mother, Louise, Duchess of Devonshire, which took place last summer.

It is believed that their Majesties will pay several private visits during the course of the summer. Chatsworth is mentioned as likely to be honoured, for both the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire are special friends of the King and Queen.

Chester Races, which take place the first week of May, will have a Royal visitor this year in the person of Prince Arthur of Connaught, who is to stay with Colonel and Mrs. Houldsworth at Carden for the three days' meeting. Carden is a most picturesque black and white timbered house about twelve miles from Chester, and is rented by Colonel and Mrs. Houldsworth from the latter's cousin, Mrs. Leche. Prince Arthur stayed at Carden for a three days' shoot in November, 1910, and experienced three days of the most hopelessly wet weather ever known, so sport was practically nil.

Londonderry House.

It was a disappointment that Lady Londonderry could not be present in person at the Sale of Work held at Londonderry House last week to help forward the funds of the memorial to the late Canon Body, which is to take the form of a Home of Rest for parochial women workers. Canon Body did a splendid work among the poor in the diocese of Durham, and one of his greatest successes was the training of Deaconesses to do practical as well as spiritual work among the thousands who in that crowded diocese need help.

In the absence of Lady Londonderry, her daughter, Lady Ilchester, took her place, wearing some lovely turquoises with her black gown, and with blue feathers in a large black hat.

In Berkeley Square.

Many good causes and institutions are being pleaded for in one way and another just now. Last week saw a most interesting gathering at Lansdowne House, when a very large audience listened to an account of the work done by the Church Army, given by Mr. Carlile, its founder, and by the heads of the Prison Department and Women's Homes. Lord Halsbury presided, and supporting him were Mr. Hayes Fisher, M.P., who gave testimony of the admirable work done by the Church Army in his constituency of Fulham, and Mr. Sam Hoare, member for Chelsea, who returned thanks to Lord and Lady Lansdowne (who, owing to mourning, were unable to be present) for lending their beautiful house, and to Lord Halsbury for presiding.

GOWNS AND GOSSIP:

THE TALE OF THE TAILOR-MADE SUIT

My Best Friend,—As far as the coat and skirt is concerned, the chronicler of fashion has but little to record in the way of changes, but that little makes all the difference between the models of the winter and those of the early spring nevertheless. Skirts are certainly slightly fuller and wider, and, in some instances, have a distinct suspicion of drapery, to which, in a tailored gown, our eye has grown very unaccustomed. Thus some of the new models made with a panelled skirt both back and front have the left side caught up under the front panel into a graceful festoon, in a way that is strongly reminiscent of an old-fashioned riding habit. Many of the new coats are cut away at the front, and in a variety of cases are deeper at the back than in front, the coat being shaped away at the sides.

On the whole, I should be inclined to say that the tailor-made suit of the season is disposed to be a somewhat severe affair, without much, if any, multiplicity of detail, the tailor relying for his effect more upon making and material than upon any extraneous trimmings. Some of the cloth and serge gowns to be seen are guiltless of any relief at all, the collar and rever being of the absolutely plain material, whilst even the buttons used are plain, and harmonise exactly in colour.

Upon those coats and skirts that are slightly more elaborate scalloping is a very favourite feature, and suits which are cleverly treated in this way are without doubt exceedingly effective. The scalloping often simulates a tunic, and then appears again at the hem of the skirt in a very pretty manner. The coat can have a scalloped border, while scalloping once more outlines the collar and rever, and in many models the diminutive breast-pocket, intended entirely for ornament and not for use, is seen. The vogue for skirts slit up at one side to show a panel of striped, spotted, or plain silk in a corresponding or contrasting shade has not departed from amongst us, this being a fact upon which we can congratulate ourselves, for the fashion is in truth a pretty one. Lace collars, hardly visible in front, but terminating in a deep round at the back, form an attractive finish to some of the most recent coats, whilst a ruche round the hem of the skirt is another development with which we have to reckon, though it is hardly necessary to say that this is only indulged in when the material of the coat and skirt is one lending itself to the fashion.

The great Poiret is exploiting worsted trimmings of crewel-worked flowers upon several of his models, and the idea is one which is very likely to be imitated, for nothing lights up a navy serge or a dark-hued cloth suit better than a pretty ornamentation of the kind, always provided, of course, that the colours of the wool have been chosen with a certain amount of discretion as to their rightful amalgamation. Without doubt the waisted coat, cut with a basque which favours a definite amount of fullness, is looming large upon our horizon, and Delia, coming to call the other afternoon, emphasised the truth of this prediction with no kind of uncertainty.

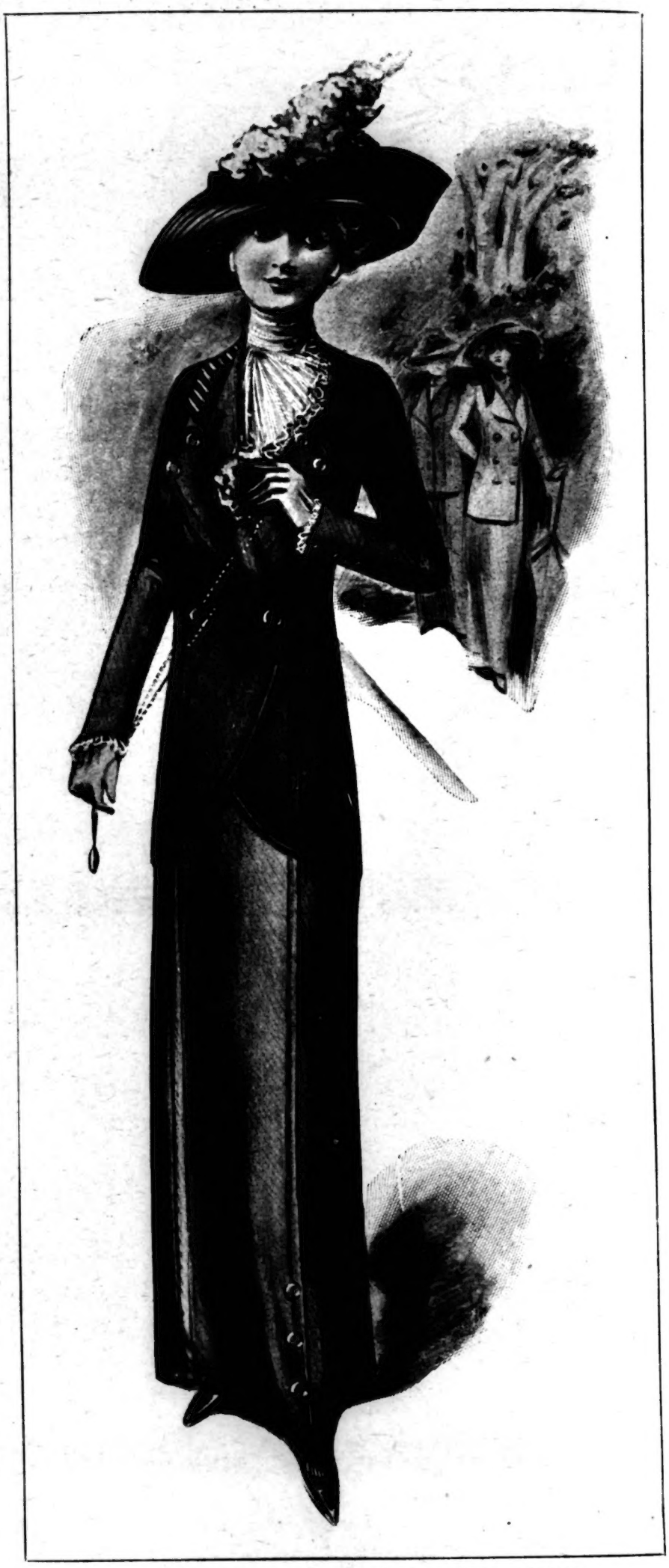
She has just returned from a brief four days in Paris, and tells me that reversible moiré promises to be the great wear there, just as taffetas is making itself seen if not heard over here. She was wearing herself a dress and long-waisted coat of pearl-grey moiré, with a reverse side of Rose du Barri satin, of which one caught a glimpse now and again as she changed her position, while she talked in the enthusiastic manner we know so well of old. Round the waist was knotted a wide Lord Fauntleroy sash of the rosy-hued satin, and these sashes, it is distinctly indicated, will run their race during the next few months with a considerable measure of success. Upon Delia's frivolous-looking head, which contains as great an amount of common sense as her heart is full of loving kindness, was poised a gathered grey velvet hat, for all the world like a modified tam o' shanter; at the front and waving over to the back was a single uncurled ostrich feather in the same charming Rose du Barri shade.

Great stress must be laid upon the definite popularity of taffetas, for all our leading dressmakers and tailors seem as determined to "run" it as their clients are to wear it. Some of the suits and dresses to be seen are in shot taffetas, others are in a plain colouring, but myself, I opine that the shot variety will win the day. The taffeta coat and skirt is generally treated with a scrolled design of flatly pleated ruchings of the silk; but recently, in the window of a famous Bond Street costumière, I saw a charming dress of Pervenche blue taffetas, shot with pale green, which was scalloped after the manner to which I have already referred. Ready to wear with it was a smart little scalloped coat in the same fabric, which was caught together in front by one large single button of cut crystal. Dark blue taffetas, also, is a delightful medium for the coat and skirt of smartish tendencies, and is one which I can recommend to those who are needing an early spring suit for bettermost occasions.

For morning or somewhat knockabout wear grey whipcord suitings are being much used, and very neat they look when their "cut" is up to the mark, and they are worn with a simple blouse and a daintily frilled jabot or side frill. A newcomer upon the scene is ratine cloth, which is for all the world like a superior form of Turkish towelling, and is produced in many lovely and delicate colourings. Drap de suede is yet another novelty, and this, as its name indicates, is of smooth texture and beautiful surface. Covert coating is undergoing a definite revival, and this is a piece of news that many people will welcome. They can all recall some faithful covert suit of long ago, which did as yeoman service for them then as its successor of this present date is prepared to do now.

It is early days to predict what will be the reigning colour or colours, but rose and mole colour will without doubt be as much associated as was purple and rose during the season that is past. A vivid shade of tangerine orange is being brought forward, but will only suit a strictly limited few, and a new shade of blue, exactly like that seen in very ancient coloured church windows, is also to the fore.

You and I, my friend and confidant, have full many a time agreed that the choice of head-gear to accompany the tailored suit presents a very possible pitfall. It is, of course, a matter which must mainly be decided by the type of coat and skirt it is to accompany. A hat which has been really cleverly trimmed with well-looped bows of ribbon always forms a fitting accompaniment to an ordinary work-a-day suit, and some of the latest ribbons are so lovely in colouring and design that they readily lend themselves to playing their part of attractive decoration. Our hats are still very Gallic in style, and however trying this Frenchness of shape may be to the purely British type of face in some unhappy instances, those whom it does happen to suit look very well indeed.



A MORNING SUIT OF CORINTHIAN RED RATINE

For every-day wear I commend this suit of Corinthian red, with its touch of black and white velvet.

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